Tract No. 98

Tirthankara Mahavira.

(HIS LIFE AND MESSAGE)

By

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With a Preface by
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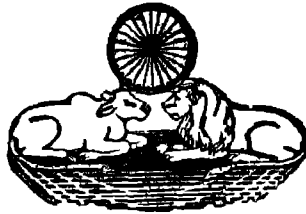
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PREFACE

This brochure about Lord Mahavīra, the last of the Tīrthankaras, has been written with such admirable clearness and simplicity, it needs no preface. In the first half, readers will find a story of Lord Mahavīra's life; in the second half, his message There are twenty-four Jain Tīrthankaras—one for every hour of the day and night !– and, when we stop to think about the mystery of time, we see that just as it is now (neither yesterday nor tomorrow but always today) so the supreme truth of the Tīrthankara is eternally up to date. Nothing good has been lost in the past nor postponed till the future. All good is in the present ready to be realized by the spiritual status-seeker here and now.

A noble contemporary of Lord Buddha, Prince Mahāvira, like Prince Gautama, soon grew tired of Society on the lower ego-centric levels of human life, and renouncing his princely riches he proceeded to demonstrate through his own unselfish example that the mind-body mechanism of man can in a single life-time be disciplined and controlled by the indwelling spirit.

Like every other great messenger of Godhood, Lord Mahāvīra chose to follow the path of self-purification at the same time never losing sight of the Oneness of all life and the importance of developing a sense of togetherness along with the striving for individual perfection. Like all Jain teachers, Lord Mahāvira was a staunch upholder of Ahinsā, the basic principle which lifts Jainism above any other religion that preaches but does not practice respect for life.

In his last message to his followers, Lord Mahāvira said that non-hurtfulness is the first and most important of all the Five Vows. It is because of the indisputable rightness of relationship based on Ahinsā that Mahāvira remains a living force in the life of India. May this brochure find its way into other countries where Mahāvira's name is yet to be known.

—Woodland Kahler

AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

In this small treatise an attempt has been made to give an authentic account of the Life and Teachings of Lord Mahāvira, the last Tīrthankara of the Jainas and a renowned Teacher of ancient India. We hope that it will not only dispel the wrong notion still prevailing in certain quarters that Mahāvira was the founder of Jainism, but it will impart a right knowledge about Jainism and its sublime message, so essential for world-peace and universal welfare of humanity.

We express our gratitude to Shri Woodland Kahler, (the Marquis of St. Innocent and the President of the International Vegetarian Union), who is also an Hony. Associate Editor of the 'VOICE OF AHINSA', for his kindness to write an inspiring and enlightening preface.

Aliganj, (Etah) ;
1st June 1961.

— K P Jain

TIRTHANKARA MAHĀVIRA

Tīrthankara Mahāvīra.

1. HIS LIFE AND CAREER

Lord Mahāvīra, the last of the Twentyfour Tīrthankaras of the Jainas, was a supreme personality, a great Kṣatriya Teacher of India and a world-famous Leader of Thought and Philosophy, who was honoured and worshipped by many hundreds and thousands of devotees. The people of Anga-Magadha were proud that their country was hallowed by the presence of so great a teacher and guide as Mahāvīra

King S'renika Bimbisāra of Magadha, the first historical monarch of India, paid the following glowing tribute to Mahāvīra, when he met Him at Rājgraha "You have made the best use of human birth, you have become a true *Jina* (Spiritual Conqueror) and you are a preceptor of mankind at large!" Forthwith the King with his wives and retinue became a staunch follower of Mahāvīra Likewise Chetaka, the powerful King of Videha, King Udāyana of Vatsa, Ajāts'atru, the emperor of Anga and Magadha and many other princes joined the order of Tīrthankara Mahāvīra He was revered by high and low alike.

Tīrthankara Mahāvīra was not the Founder of Jainism, which being the science of Religion is an eternal Truth. As such, Mahāvīra was more a reformer and a world Teacher He having acquired the omniscience became a living sun of knowledge, Even the Suttas of the Buddhists record him as 'an all-wise and all-knowing Teacher and an old philosophor of great following.' He was a contemporary of Gotama, the Buddha.

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1. *Majjhima-nikāya. 1.*

On th 13th bright day of the month of Chaitra in 599 B C the people of Kundagrām and of the Vajjian Confederacy gathered in the City of the Jñātrika Ksatriyas for a great celebration, because a son was born on that auspicious day to Triśalā Priyakārinī, the queen of King Siddhārtha The city wore a gala appearance The prisoners were set free and King Siddhārtha distributed alms among the poors The Indra with his retinue of devas came to celebrate the eventful birth of a son to King Siddhārtha, who was destined to be the last Tīrthankara.

Since prior to his birth when his great soul descended from heaven in the womb of queen Trishalā, the citizens of Kundagrāma experienced increase in their wealth and prosperity, Queen saw auspicious dreams and the royal wealth also increased, so the parents named him Vardhamāna. Since he was the son of a scion of the Jñātrikās, he was called Jñātraputra

A couple of sages namely Sanjaya and Vijaya, who had heard about the greatness of the baby-prince, came to see him. At his very glance they felt so much exhilirated that they exclaimed: "How beautiful he looks!" Not only this much, they also felt that their philosophical doubts, which were troubling their mind since long, had disappeared, they wondered and bowed to the would-be Tīrthankara They went their way duly satisfied, and proclaimed about a great future for him.

The soul of Prince Mahāvīra had accumulated great merits for him from the pious and virtuous acts he had performed in his previous births: So from his very birth he possessed a gifted personality, strong in physique and strong in spirit His teachers were ever surprised to find him surpassingly brilliant. Even as a young prince he took the vows of an householder. It was his nature that whatever he believed to be true, he always tried to put it into practice. As he saw so he realised the greatness of his immortal soul He was bravest of the braves, because

he made the right use of his power and prowess. He lived in the world, but was above its worldly things. How beautifully the poet depicts this very truth of his life in the following stanza —

True dignity was his, whose tranquil mind:
Virtue had raised above the things below!"

The greatest of the youngmen was he, because he had chosen the Right Path with invincible resolve. Although born in an aristocratic royal family, yet he was the most democratic in his behaviour. He saw the same spirit like his own shining and working within every living being So his behavior towards all was full of kindness and equality His ideal of citizenship was based on this common heritage of spirituality. So he believed rightly that there is and there can be, no greatness in material things, their greatness is determined by their right use and disposition. He, therefore, was always alert to conquer desires and to resist the sorest temptations from within and without. Being aware of the infinite power of his immortal soul, he was calmest in storms and most fearless and most unfaltering under the worsest moments of trials. His greatness, indeed, was hidden in his unselfish love and anxiety to serve all beings His faith in the unfailing efficacy of Ahinsā was unsurpassable

Once while Prince Vardhamāna was taking delight in contemplating the beauty of his inner soul, he was disturbed to hear a great noise from the streets of Kundagrāma. Instantly he spring up and ran out barefooted. He saw that the royal elephant had gone amok and the citizens were running frightfully hither and thither. Prince Vardhamāna being an embodiment of celestial love went near the mad elephant and climbing upon him pacified him in no time The citizens were pleased and admired his courage. But in this instance they would have been wiser, had they not overlooked a greater accomplishment of the Prince, which consisted in his extraordinary

courage and self-control to tame and conquer the mad elephant of lust at that young age His acts of benevolence though simple, were full of meaning and inspiration.

On another occasion when Prince Vardhamāna was out in the royal gardens playing with his companions the game of hide and seek, he and his playmates were disturbed to hear a noisy hissing sound When the sound came quite close, they found a big poisonous cobra coming towards them The boys immediately scattered away in all directions, screaming with fear, but the Prince kept standing calm and quiet at his place. When cobra came almost upon him hissing out poisonous sparks vehemently, he caught hold of its tail and danced smilingly climbing over its spreaded hood The playmates saw, this feat of great courage with awe and surprise. But their curiosity knew no bounds when they saw the cobra transforming itself into a shining semi-god of heavens. The god revealed his real individuality and bowing his head said, "Indeed, Prince, Thou art a great hero, a true Mahāvira Right was Indra to call you the hero of the heroes!" The *deva* was so pleased with his fortitude, that he put on the Prince and his companions on his shoulders and began to dance in joy

In such deeds of kindliness, helpfulness and service Prince Vardhamāna always felt delighted. It was his innate feeling of love and peace which elevated his soul and endeared him to all And the result of his love in action, which so wonderfully coincides with the following poetical expression of Ella Wheeler Wilcox, seems a thing of beauty eternal:—

"The heart which feels this holy light within,
Finds God, and man, and beast and bird its kin,
All class distinctions fade and disappear,
Death is but life and heaven, he feels, is near!"

A soul aspiring to reach higher spheres of spiritual progress, Prince Vardhamāna was always awake to go

ahead and forward. Mortals remain passing on from one birth to another, they change their bodily coils and remain suffering always the miseries of this world. But Prince Vardhamāna had a conscious awakening of spirit from his very childhood, which kept his mind engaged in such sublime thoughts as depicted in the following stanzas –

"Now it is that the truth dawns upon me,
That all affection for things worldly is false
Oh the fool that depends every now and then
–on the morrow,
When not even a moment can be relied upon.
Do not be neglectful even a single moment,
For Death thy enemy is hovering on thy head!"

Delighting in such lofty sentiments and thoughts of Truth Prince Vardhamāna grew up into a well accomplished beautiful youth. His parents having a desire to get their young son married, began to search for a suitable princess for him. After a long search Princess Yaśodā of Kalinga was selected as his bride She was brought to Kundagrāma with all royal pomp and nuptial rejoicings began to be celebrated with all eclat The Digambara tradition goes that as soon as the Prince came to know of them and their purpose, he felt much aggrieved at heart and outright refused to marry, inspite of all pursuasions of his mother Queen Triśalā, but according to the Svetāmbara tradition, on being pressed by his parents and their relatives he had to concede to their wishes in accepting the hand of Yaśodā Anyway, it is evident from the Śvetāmbara tradition, also, that Mahāvira Vardhamāna took the vows of a monk as a *Kumāra.*

When Prince Mahāvīra Vardhamāna was about thirty years of age he became so much disgusted with the vane egoiatic and fanciful ways of human society that it became an unbearable burden for him to stay any longer at home Realising that even the least tinge of attachment for

material things creates woes and worries in life, he decided to devote the rest of his life to the attainment of eternal peace by eradication of all the evils which by taking deep roots within the self had become its very nature. Accordingly he gave away his riches and belongings to the poor and the needy and took his way to forest to become one with unbounded nature and its inmates, free from all limits and bounds, free from all customs and fashions, free from all attachments and aversions, moving like a lion without any foe or fear. *Indras* and *devas* came felicitating and praising him for his spiritual vision and loftiness of ideal. They took him in a heavenly palanquin to the *Vanakhanda* grove, where the Prince put off his clothes, also the last remnants of artificiality, becoming as nude as the newborn innocent child; he then seated himself in a Yogic posture under a Sal tree and plucked out his hairs in five handfuls, as if to throw an open challenge to all sorts of bodily afflictions. The Prince - Ascetic began his saintly career with the observance of a fast of two days. There after he took his first meals as a monk at the hands of a Jñātrika prince named Kumāra-nripa, thus providing another occasion of rejoicings to the briskful *devas*.

From the very day of his initiation Mahāvira had taken the great vow of silence. So during the whole period of his asceticism, while he was engaged in fighting out the deep-rooted devils of nescience and infatuation, he kept himself perfectly calm and quiet, away from populace, away from haunted places It was very rare that he was seen going towards towns and cities, and that too for getting alms after weeks and months. Mostly he passed his time in meditation in lonely places, like cremation grounds, silent caves, dense forests and hilly peaks. For twelve years he thus, went about like the holy shadow casting love and compassion all around without a word, without any longing, all alone, hardly taking food and water after twelve days on the average.

During his wanderings, Mahāvīra had suffered all kinds of hardships and pains but without any stir or loss of equanimity. He was a keen searcher ef truth, the *summum bonum* of life. For this purpose, while he was endowed with clear crystal psychic powers, he also possessed an invincible will-power to follow his set path with whatever difficulties it may be embeded. He was an ideal ascetic, fully controlled in mind, speech and action. He was an invincible urge for perfection of Godhood. It has been rightly said of him that, "Deliberately, without a single moment of hesitation or doubt, Mahāvīra proceeds to demonstrate in his own example how the human mind can be desciplined and controlled in such a way that the highest intellectual and spiritual level can be attained in a single life-time".

Though Mahāvīra was primarily an ascetic set on the course of self-purification for attainment of perfection, yet he was never unmindful of the social inequalities prevailing all round due to vanities of human heart. Whenever any occasion arose, he ever tried by his example to bring those social errors to the public notice and make them to follow the right sort of conducts. One cause of these inequalities was the custom of slavery, which had been in vogue from much earlier times.

At that time Kośāmbī was a great commercial centre and traders, from far and near, all came there to deal in various sorts of mercantile goods, which besides chattels consisted of slaves also. Mahāvīra, also, while wandering from place to place once happened to come thither and his attention was drawn to this nefarious trade in slaves. One day when he entered that city for almstaking, many rich and high class people, at every nook and corner, came forward to offer food to him, but Mahāvīra with a set purpose at heart of eradicating the evil of slavery from the social system paid no heed towards them: he with firm steps and silent mood continued his search up and down the

streets for a slave donor. At last Mahāvīra came to the house of Seth Vṛasabhadatta, where his slave girl Chandanā by name, bound in fetters, in all obeisance, was awaiting his approach to offer him her portridge of coarse rice People of Kos'āmbī were greatly surprised, when they saw the Lord turning his steps towards her to take alms from her hands Thus Mahāvīra by his wise step gave a new turn to the social notions of high and low prevailing those days. Even the *devas* came to praise the Lord for this magnanimous action Though all this event had passed off without a word from the Lord, yet it worked miracles The King of Kos'āmbī set free that slave girl and gave her a high place in his palace Other people, also, followed the suit, which was but all natural and thereby the evil custom of slavery was put to an end by the same people who were accustomed to it from time immemorial

Mahāvīra was a staunch follower of Ahimsā and he was never found wanting to prove its efficacy in opposition to a challenge of violence from whatever quarter and in whatever form it came to him Once Mahāvīra while engaged in deep meditation in a forest, a farmer came with his bullocks and left them to graze there, so narrates the S'vetāmbara Jain tradition. While going to his home for meals, the farmer made a request to the great saint to look after his bullocks, little knowing that the saint was self-absorbed and he was not hearing his words! When the farmer returned and found his bullocks missing, he asked for their whereabouts; but Mahāvīra remained silent Thereupon the farmer lost his temper. "What? you will not tell me, what became of my bullocks. You thief," the farmer shouted and lashed Mahāvīra severely with the rope of bullocks. but he was silent and not a word passed from Lord's mouth He bore all this torture and humiliation with perfect calm and compassion in his looks, pitying the farmer for his ignorance that "he doth not know what he hath done !" This ahinsist attitude of the Lord, full

of love and self-sacrifice, was so appealing, so purifying, that the farmer soon realised his mistake. He turned with tears of remorse towards the Lord and fell in his pious feet, beseeching, "pardon, pardon," but the Lord was observing the vow of silence, simply smiled and took his way in hilly heights.

Again it is narrated in the S'vetāmbara Jain tradition that during the period of his asceticism once Lord Mahāvīra took his journey to the Vajrabhūmi of Rādhades'a, the colony of the non-Aryan aboriginies. They were by their nature very cruel and quarrelsome. It appears that Lord took this journey not only for the eradication of his accumulated *Karmas* but also for teaching those non-Aryans the lesson of compassion and forgiveness In the beginning their attitude towards the Lord was very harsh and inhuman They accused him to be a thief and a vagabond. They abused him, spate on him, threw stone on him and left their dogs on him When Lord had borne all these tortures and inhumanities with full calmness and forgiveness, a sudden change came over them, a tide of love, compassion and respect awoke them and they felt very repentful over all what they had done.

As a matter of fact, Lord Mahāvīra, although observing the vow of silence, but was more concerned in preventing the brutalization of human nature. Consequently he never let go any opportunity of turning out the beast from the mind of human beings. On another occasion he happened to arrive at Ujjain; where he was standing lost in meditation at the cremation ground known as *Atimuktaka*. A certain Rudra, the personification of violence, appeared on the scene The very idea of peace and calmness, which was playing on the smiling face of Mahāvīra, became source of envy and irritation for Rudra. He could not with-hold the beast of violence which was lurking in his vicious heart Intending to test Mahāvīra's perseverance and fortitude, he began to interrupt him, but

Mahāvīra did not leave his *Dhyāna,* rather he remained constantly absorbed in his meditation Rudra left no stone unturned to inflict all sorts of afflictions and sufferings on the great *Yogin,* but Mahāvīra was calm and quiet Having completely satisfied himself. Rudra realised his mistake and fell in his lotus feet. He begged pardon and began to praise him As a great Soul, Mahāvīra bore all the sufferings with great courage and equanimity

Such are the examples of fortitude, forbearance and forgiveness of Lord Mahāvīra, which made a deep impression on the public-mind and made him a worshipable deity for the masses, who adored him and said —

"O Master! We have beholden Thine Grace this day!
Thou art the God of Gods, O Lord,
Thine feet we worship therefore!"

At the end of twelve years of long penances and meditation, Mahāvīra came to Jiambhakagrāma, (perhaps modern Jhiriā in Bihar), a calm and quiet place on the bank of Rijukūlā river. Here he took his seat under a sal tree and absorbed himself in *śukladhyāna*– the process of pure meditation,–whereby he was able to destroy root and branch all that network of *karmas,* which had kept his faculties of vision and knowledge hidden from him. On this annihilation, his psychic powers bloomed forth in their full radiance like a sun and he became an omniscient Lord ! Thus at the age of fortytwo he had became a Jina an Arhant Kevalī-allseeing and all - knowing He knew and saw all conditions of the world of the gods, men and animals whence they come, whither they go, where they are born as men or animals, gods or infernal beings, according to their deeds (*Jaina Sūtras,* pt I, pp 260-264) This fact has been corroborated by the Buddhist texts, too, which declare him as "the head of an order, of a following, the teacher of a school, well - known and of repute as a sophist, revered by the people, an

all-knowing and all-seeing master, who was endowed with unlimited knowledge and vision''[1].

It is a common belief that time is the stuff the worldly life is made of and space is its ground to rest upon, but Mahāvira had conquered time and space both, which awarded him the beauty of infinite cosmic life. He had not only conquered ignorance, but the ugliness of death as well! So His personality was shinning in the glory of the sun of knowledge and in the immortal beauty of spirit.

Indra perceived His unsurpassable beauty with the eye of his clairvoyance and he with his retinue once again appeared on the scene to celebrate the *Kevala-jñāna-kalyānaka*, the greatest of the events in the life of a Tirthankara He offered his flowers of devotion to the World Teacher and looking to the spiritual needs of humanity, requested the Lord to be pleased to set the Wheel of Dharma into motion, but the Lord kept silence, not a word came out of Him. This state of silence continued for about 65 days. Indra was preplexed of this, little knowing what to do After a long search by means of clairvoyance, Indra came to know that unless and until there be a competent scholar to work as a *Ganadhara* or *Ganapati*, i e a medium of interpretation and recording of the revealed truth, the truth would not be revealed. Along with it Indra also visualised that the only person who would work as an apostle medium to the Lord was Indra-bhūti Gautama, the well-renowned scholar and teacher of the Vedic lore. So he so managed the affairs that Indrabhūti on hearing the arrival of the omniscient Lord Mahāvira at Madhyamā himself felt an inner urge to see the Lord to get rid of the doubts pertaining to soul which were straining him for a long time Accordingly he hastened to the Lord and got his doubts cleared off by hearing the first learned discourse of the omniscient Teacher He heard and realised that the seer and knower

1 Dīgha, I p 59 and Majjhima-Nikāya, II p 2.

of all things is neither the body, nor its sense organs : it is an inner reality-a subjective reality, a purposeful reality It is the 'I' the self itself. It is the self-existent, the axiomatic truth, the judge of all truths, the truth of truths It is the grasper of all, unifier of all finite and infinite It is the absolute, the *Kaivalya*, the one without the second. It is the proposer, the controller and dispenser of all lively actions It is the way, the truth and the life. It is the end of all ends, the *summum bonum* of life It is not the eye that sees, it is the self which sees through the eyes It is not the ear that hears, it is the self that hears through the ears. On the coming of this self, the body and its organs get animated and on its departure they all wither and die.

On hearing this sermon, Indrabhūti got enlightened and then and there he along with his five hundred disciples got initiated into the S'ramana fold Thereupon his two Younger brothers Agnibhūti and Vāyaubhūti, also, who were alike erudite scholars of Vedic faith, having their doubts removed, got themeselves initiated in the order of the S'ramanas, along with their followings of 500 disciples each Other Brāhmana and Ksatriya scholars like Vyakta, Sudharma, Mandik, Mauryaputra, Akampik, Achalabhratas, Maitreya and Prabhāsa, who were present at that time with their followers, followed the suit. Thus within a day 4400 Brāhmaṇas and Ksatriyas got initiated in the S'ramana Order of Lord Mahāvīra at Madhyamī. Out of them Indrabhūti Gautama being the wisest and the most revered became the chief disciple –*Ganadhara*–of the Lord*. This event proved highly instrumental in bringing about a strange revolution of thought and Ahinsā in the religious atmosphere of Magadha. This was the last miracle of silence of Lord Mahāvīra .

*Cf. 'Rigveda' (2.34.6) where Ganadharas are alluded to as '*gandharvas*, whose work was to record the teaching of an omniscient God See mine Hindi book 'Adi-Tirthankara Bhagvāna Rishabhadeva '

At that time Indra took the opportunity to request the Lord to set the Wheel of Dharma rolling and accompanied him on his preaching tour. Indra provided a beautiful preaching-hall for the Lord at every place, which was called '*Samava-sarana*' [refuge of equality and equanimity for all] The artistic beauty of which was unique. On its main gates of entrance stood very beautiful pillars of glory: the strangeness of their art and skill had surpassed the charm and beauty of modern television pillars, because in those mirror-like pillars the scenes of the previous births of the onlooker were revealed by the Devas with the aid of their clairvoyance. They served the purpose of enlightening the people spiritually.

From place to place the Great Teacher went preaching to all the path of peace and piety, the path of truth and Ahinsa, the path of self-knowledge and self-control, the path of real Swarājya, the kingdom of God. Peoples of all sorts, males and females, Āryans and non-Āryans,Brāhmanas and Ksatriyas, Vaisyas and S'ūdras,without any distinctions of caste and colour, of high and low, took their shelter at Lord's feet and purified themselves by taking various vows of Ahinsa and selfcontrol. His perfect personality was so full of lustre and beatitude, that it was shedding the soothing light of peace all around, so much so that even ferocious animals lost their enmity with eachother and made playful frolicks here and there in his vicinity.

"Spotted Deer
Broused fearless where the tigress fed her cubs,
And cheetahas lapped the pool beside the bucks
. .. . The spirit of our Lord
Lay potent upon man and bird and beast!"

Nature herself responded to the psychic attraction from the Lord His spiritual radiance shone round Him over a radius of many *yojanas* and consequently the atmosphere became so bright and joyous that every living being felt happy and prosperous.

It was but natural that the name and the fame of the Blessed Lord began to spread all around like sweet fragrance ! People began to say, "Mahāvīra is a great Teacher. He is omniscient. He speaks truth." Thousands of them in search of truth flocked to him and became his followers. Many of them were great rulers of India, e. g S'renika Bimbisāra and Ajāts'atru of Magadha, Chetaka of Vais'ālī, Prasenjit of Shrāvastī, Udayana of Sindhu-Souvīra etc.

At the age of 72 years Mahāvīra came to Pāvā in Bihar and delivered his last sermon. One of his Ganadharas asked him which of his Teachings he considered to be the most important. And Mahāvīra answered: "Of all my Teachings Ahinsā, the first of the Five Vows, is the most important, for by its implication the other four vows also come within its purview. Life is dear and sacred to all. None wants to die. All are afraid of disease and death, harm and injury, so Ahinsā is the highest religion Every one should try to deal with others like one's own self, extending love and fellowship to all, respect to the elders, compassion for the needy, meekness and tolerance towards the perverse views: In nutshell 'live and let live' should be the greatest motto of life "

After delivering the above sermon, Lord Mahāvīra again observed the vow of silence and absorbed himself in the ultimate form of *s'ukladhyāna*, the eternal *Samādhi*. In due course he annihilated his *Aghātiya* (the body -framing) Karmas and attained *Nirvāṇa* in the morning of the dark *Amāvasyā* day of *Kārtika* in 527 B C.

"From manhood Godhead He attains,
He is all virtuous right
The best and highest of all souls,
He is the soul's full light.
When body, speech, and mind fall off,
From such a Perfect Soul
Then He is called unbodied
Which is the--God-purest Goal !"

Indra, the Lord of the celestial region, with his retinue of semi-gods and goddesses, again came to Pāvā to celebrate the *Nirvāṇa-Kalyāṇaka.* The confederate kings of Lichchavis, Mallas and Iksvākus and many others assembled at Pāvā to pay their last obeisance to the great Tīrthankara. They lighted the lamps as if to frustrate the darkness of ignorance which might enshroud the world in the absence of the Lord. This event is being commemorated in India till this day in the form of the national festival of *Dīpāvalī,* the Festival of Lamps.

Such was the sublimity of life and teachings of the Last Tīrthankara that He still stands as an ideal of self-control and abandonment, of *Truth* and Ahinsā for the future generations of saints and seers. Mahāvira has, thus, remained a living force in India for the last 25 centuries and it has influenced the thought and culture of Arabia, Ethiopia, Irān, Egypt, Central Asia and even Greece. His principle of Ahinsa, even this day, has been the greatest source of inspiration for Mahātmā Gandhi in his struggle for India's freedom, who has claimed Mahāvīra as the greatest among the apostles of Ahinsā. The greatest poet of this age, Dr. Rabindranātha Tagore, also, has remarked that the religion of truth and Ahinsā as proclaimed by Mahāvīra is a reality and not a mere dogma or convention, that salvation is sure to be achieved by following the path trodden by him and that religion is a path of conduct towards one's own self and towards others, and not a mere observance of external ceremonies. Path of religion is ever abiding, it holds good everywhere, it marks no distinction between man and man, or any race or clime. Wonderous to say that this teaching rapidly conquered the whole country !

—K. P. JAIN

2. LORD MAHĀVĪRA'S MESSAGE.

The message of Mahāvīra is a message of cheerful hopes and brilliant prospects for one and all. It may be summed up into seven truths

1. Life is not a dream It is a reality, the greatest reality, ever asserting itself through the self-consciousness of ' I '. This ' I ' is not an out-growth of something else. It is a self-existing and independent reality. It is an eternal reality, ever moving on through various phases and vicissitudes of life, giving all of them the meaning of a continuum ' I '. It is living from ever and is going to live for ever. It is *Jīva* The body which rises with conception and dies with death is not ' I ' but matter. ' I ' is immortal.

This ' I ' needs no proof, it is a self-axomatic truth. This ' I ' is not only a truth, but the truth of truths. It is the testimony of all things, the judge of all values, the bestower of all beauties. It is a dynamic reality, the source of all longings and aspirations, creator of all ideals and imaginations, generator of all fancies and dreams, and director of all activities. It is all feeling, willing and knowing. It is a stream of life, which paying attention to things, giving meanings to them, discriminating right and wrong, and determining modes of behaviour, ever moves, on and on through thick and thin

This ' I ' is not only a means to an end it is an end in itself. It is the highest end, the highest purpose, the highest good. It is Godhood in itself This Godhood forms the ultimate reality of life, ever manifesting itself through so many longings and yearnings of peace and bliss, of light and splendour, of freedom and perfection. It is this Godhood which fills life with zest and vigour, urge and effort, ever propelling it on and on till its full realisation.

It is this God-hood which has given life such a unique and fascinating charm that none wants to die. Life is dear to all It is for this God-hood that 'I' has become the way, the truth and the life, 'I' has become the seeker, the sought and the search.

2 But Ah! this 'I' is robbed of his self, his God-hood by the very environment, in which he lives, has his being and makes his enjoyment, it, as experienced by senses spreads all round far and near like a mesh of glamours born of myriad sorts of thrills of touch, taste, smell, colour and sound, trembling and twinkling flying and passing, sometimes mild and attractive, sometimes acute and repulsive. It is indeed, a realm of wonders and curiosities born of lights and shadows, reflections and images, approaching and receding, rising and fading, appearing and disappearing, everchanging their forms and places, too illusive to be caught, too deceptive to be possessed, too flimsy to be sustained, too ephemeral to be enjoyed

It is all the pageantry of matter massive and minute, dense and varified, ever integrating and disintegrating, ever radiating and absorbing, ever reflecting and counter-reflecting, ever acting and reacting, giving rise to a floating stream of sensations some lovely some pinching, some alluring, some disgusting.

Though in its sportive play of colours and shades, reflections and images, lights and shadows, echoes and re-echoes, though in its reflexive processes of attractions and repulsions, affinities and strifes, flows and flights matter seems to be quite akin to the bountiful beauties of life, quite akin to its imagery and lustre, quite akin to its exhilaration and merry-making, yet in reality, it is so different in character, so independent in working, so other in existence, that for all your love and care it can never become your own It is altogether of a different order, of a different nature from 'I' while 'I, is a subjective, conative and sentient reality, matter is an objective, non-

-conative and insentient reality. While 'I' is a caretaking and heedfull reality with a sense of purpose and a sense of discrimination, matter is absolutely reckless and callous with no sense of propriety, no regard for purpose. While 'I' is an all grasping, all unifying reality with its trends towards synthesis and harmony, matter is a separating and splitting reality with its trends towards divisibility and exclusiveness. While 'I' is a stabilising and immortalising reality with its trends towards absoluteness and perfection, retentivity and constacy, matter is an unstable and transient reality with its trends towards vacillation and fluctuation. While 'I' is a gay and jubilant reality with its trends towards self-abnegation and abandonment, matter is a concrete and tangible reality breft of enjoyment with its trends towards density and tenacity. While 'I' is a simple and straight reality with its trends towards peace and equanimity, smoothness and evenness, matter is an odd and crooked reality with its trends towards extremeties and polarity of opposites.

This matter in essence is pudgala (पुद्गल) growing and dacaying, rising and vanishing, stirring and slumbering, active and lethargic Undoubtedly it is endowed with energy of action, energy of motion, yet all its energy is attended with fatigue and slumber. Though it looks bright and beautiful, charming and smiling, yet all its lustre and beauty is attended with decay and darkness, all its charms and smiles are attended with thorny pricks, all its attraction has a repulsion hidden therein. Its familiarity breeds contempt and its sameness produces boredom. It is never even, never constent, never absolute, never perfect. It is always rough and ruffled in surface, odd (विषम) and crooked in motion, shaky and indecisive in action, bounded and limited in scope. It is ever qualified by time and space

It is not what it appears to be. It is always a mirage, illusive and deceptive, callous and cruel, in a moment

raising castles of hopes, yet in another flying away like the dew of morn Its acquisition is no good, it is neither easy nor comforting. Its arrival is heralded with pain and anxiety, its ownership is charged with vanity and discontentment, and its departure is ever tracked with sighs and tears. In brief the story of matter begins with happy prospects but it ever ends in tragedy.

Inspite of its so many defects and disparities, it is a pity that ' I ' again and again falls a prey to matter. While looking to it, it always looks to its alikeness, but he never looks to its dislikeness, its separate and distinctive features, its faithless, and failing character, its deceptive and illusive nature. Though its perils and pitfalls, cruelties and failures do come to sight in times of sorrow, but the daily routine of crying needs and requirements ever drown them into forgetfulness They are ever lost in infatuation of Instinctive cravings.

For this alikeness for this infatuation, matter is the greatest deceiver, the betrayer of life. Once one puts his faith in it, tries to make it his own, dedicates his self to it, he is verily doomed to pain and agony, woes and worries, grief and sorrow It is indeed the deadliest enemy of life. It is the Ahi (अहि), the serpent, the Māra (मार), the tempter, which is constantly at work in baffling, entangling and devouring of life.

3 It is due to this deception, that I and matter though belonging to different roles, have become counterparts of each other in the drama of life. It is the fusion of confusion of these two realities, which has given rise to the dualistic character of mundane life, -- material and spiritual, mortal and immortal, sentient and insentient.

This fusion and confusion is the real cause of the paradoxical problem of life, which though ever looking to peace and bliss, ever longing for light and immortality, ever aspiring for absoluteness and perfection is being ever dragged to pain and misery, wants and beggary, ignora-

nce and mortality.

It is due to this fusion and confusion, that God-hood which forms the basic core of life is not manifested in all in the same degree. In some it is highly evolved, while in others it lies deep in abeyance. The cause of all this difference lies not in the nature of God-hood which is the common heritage of all, but in the intensity and propensity, in the tinges and trends of the coverings of matter which hide the self like clouds hiding the sun.

The material of these coverings does not come by itself, it always comes at the bidding of self. Whenever 'I' identifies himself with matter, when he begins to feel one with its workings, when he takes sides with its affinities and disgusts, he also by sympathetic process begins to throb and pulsate like matter, he also develops a polarity of likes and dislikes in him, he also assumes the moods of attraction (राग) and repulsion (द्वेष) in him in forms of so many passions. Thus situated 'I' behaves like matter, looks like matter, becomes like matter. Thus materialised 'I' sucks in the most rarified particles of matter called kārmānraj (कार्माणरज) rolling in space all round, just like the water sucked in by a hot ball of clay agitated with fire. Through this sort of āsrava (आस्रव) or inflow of Karmic fluid called *apāh*, *āpāh* or *narā* (अपा आप: or नारा), 'I' establishes a sort of illicit relationship with the outside realm of matter. This Karmic fluid, thus works as a liaison agent between the self and the non-self.

Excepting those moments, when 'I' pulls himself up from material moods and modes to his self of peace and equanimity, of grace and sublimity, the inflow of the Karmic fluid goes on adding every moment, webbing itself into manifold coverings (आवरण) of various tinges and trends As these coverings coil the self like a dragon, they are called vritra (वृत्र), or vritrāni (वृत्राणि), the wrappers. As by process of assimilation and adjustment they form themselves into an organised subtle body, they are called

the Sūkshma Sharīr (सूक्ष्म शरीर), the subtle body. As they are made of Kārmān (कार्माण) variety of matter, they are called Kārmān Sharīr (कार्माण शरीर), the body made of Kārmān Matter.

These coverings truly speaking are graphs or films or thrills and throbbings of body, speech and mind aroused by one's own psychic activities, recorded in pictography. For this reason their structural body is also termed as chitragupta (चित्रगुप्त), the preserver of pictures, or linga-body (लिङ्ग शरीर), the album of one's mentality These coverings are adopted by self as an economic device for preserving his experiences, attained and learnt by him by way of instincts in the realm of matter by processes of trial and error This device is being resorted and stuck to by self for guidance of his conduct by way of response or reaction to the outside stumili, as well as for perfecting his arts and feats of matter. It provides him with skills of embryogeny and physiogeny for framing, functioning and controlling the vital processes of body, for selecting, mixing and adjusting the colours and designs of body. It provides him with instincts for working, curing and sustaining the mechanism of body. It provides him with urges for securing and hoarding the wealths of the outside. It enables him to blind his vision of the inner and open his vision of the outside in form of so many senses. It enables him to minimise the values of the self and maximise the values of the non-self It enables him to subside the self and bring the non-self into prominence

These coverings are not of a constant intensity or of a uniform type They go on increasing or decreasing, changing or shifting with the psychic trends of mind The more and more one adopts the moods and modes of matter the more and more one gets entangled in matter. The more and more one longs for and fastens with matter, the more and more intense becomes the bondage of matter.

But however intensely and inextricably one may be fused and confused with matter, one never ceases to be the self, the conscious ' I '. Like the constituents of an ore of gold, self ever remains self and matter ever remains matter, the twain never become one.

However infatuated, one may be with forms and feats of matter, however worried and embrassed one may be with the tightening grips of matter, his reality of Godhood never goes out of existence. It like the sun behind clouds ever goes on shedding its lustre on his paths. It ever goes on giving its glimpses to him through longings for bliss, hopes for good, urges for perfection, suggestions for freedom, and manifestations of love and compassion This reality of godhood is the truest strength of the weakest, the help of the helpless, the prop of the propless in the ocean of life. This Godhood is the truest friend, the closest comrade of life. It is nearest to the nearest, residing within One's own self One may lose sight of him, but he never loses sight of self He is the self of self the inherent good, the summum bonum of life of each and every being from the highest to the lowest. He is the eternal truth; to Him every one turns for shelter in hour of utter helplessness

It is in search of this Godhood that life has become a big pilgrimage with countless stays and starts in various regions of space. It is for the evolution of this Godhood, that life has become a vast experimentation with filling and emptying of myriad forms of matter. It is for the achievment of this Godhood that life has become an incessant effort to rise from the achieved to the unachieved, from the visible to the invisible. It is for the realisation of this Godhood, that life has become a great fight against foes and fears limitations and bondage.

It is for this Godhood that life has become not only a conative reality, but a creative reality also. ' I ' is not only endowed with an inherent urge of evolving his hidden

Godhood, he is also inherently endowed with inexhaustible fortitude and infinite resourcefulness of beliefs, concepts and behaviours for the realisation of this Godhood.

Life's faculty of belief is so vast, so potent that it enables self to become any thing of his choice, sense or nonsense, good or bad, whether belonging to the domain of self or of non-self, so much so, as to assume the form of matter and behave like it It makes things ordinarily impossible to be possible and inconceivable to be conceivable. It provides self with the wonderful art of mimickry, the art of Māyā.

Propelled by his longings, whatever one believes himself to be, the same sort of concepts he forms of himself and whatever concepts he forms, the same sort of behaviour he adopts, and whatever behaviour he adopts, the same sort of thing he becomes.

This process of becoming, goes on intensifying by repetitions. By sowing actions one reaps a habit, by sowing habit one reaps an instinct, and by sowing instincts one reaps an individuality. Thus every one is his own architect of fate, the modeller of his to-day and tomorrow; the maker of his hell or heaven One's future lies in one's hands Every one is his own friend or foe Whatever good or bad, pleasant or painful experiences one has in life, it is all an outcome of his own right or wrong beliefs, of his own concepts and behaviours. It is all futile to look to others for help or to blame others for one's short-comings and failures

4. Though every one has an urge to rise from darkness to light, from misery to happiness, from death to immortality and from limitations to perfection, yet everyone moves to this ideal by the path of his own beliefs, concepts, and behaviours.

These beliefs, concepts ahd behaviours of all beings are not the same, they differ from being to being and from species to species. It is due to this difference in the

psychical structure of beings that there is visible such a vast panorama of life, with different forms, different aptitudes, different efficiencies and different fortunes. These psychic differences with their physical forms may briefly be classified into four broad categories-human, subhuman, heavenly and hellish

These beliefs, concepts and behaviours of mundane beings are ever beset with various sorts of nescience, (Mithyātva), indiscipline (Avirati), Callousness (pramāda), passions (Kashāyas) and sensual thrills (Yoga). So they are never constant. By process of trial and error they ever go on changing from belief to belief, from concept to concept, from behaviour to behaviour and with it one's fortune also goes on changing. Before one is face to face with his cherished goal, one has to pass through countless fallacies and failures, one has to try countless forms of and species one has to sojourn in various regions of the universe This path of achievment is a long path full of countless reverses, countless ups and downs, countless failures and successes. It is an uphill path of a traveller constantly bound by shackles and fetters of matter from times immemorial It is the ardous path of a piligrm in bondage (बन्ध).

5. But one need not feel despaired of his past fallacies and failures, one should trust himself, his self–conscious 'I', his inherent urge for freedom, his inner suggestions of conscience. One should trust that while one has a freedom to do wrong, one has also the freedom to do the right. If one by his ehoice of wrong belief, wrong concept, wrong behaviour depraves himself into miserable serfdom, one by his right belief, right concept and right behaviour can raise himself to blissful divinity. This bondage though coming from eternity, is not to last for ever. It can be ended by one's own efforts.

Let the past bury its dead. It is no use remorsing over it. Take care of your present. Look to the vast

pageantry life made of so many names and forms, and see how they with a deep longing for bliss are groaning with pains, with an aspiration for perfection are suffering from wants, with a yearning for immortality are meeting with death. Distinguish between things of these longings and things of actualities. Believe that things of longings belong to the domain of self, while things of actualities belong to the domain of matter. Believe that activity and fatigue, awakeness and sleep, birth and growth, decay and death are things not of 'I' but of body made of flesh. Believe that 'I' is the purest and glorious spirit, aloof and distinct from matter. Believe that things sought by 'I' do not reside in the outside, they reside within. Believe that 'I' is the abode of Godhood.

"Know thyself, and thyself shall make thee free". Unless this self is known, believed and lived, the whole life is a sheer waste of time, waste of effort, a mere wandering in wilderness, a mere diving in waters, a mere feeding of death.

What is needed is not cessation of effort-for there can be no cessation of effort till the absolute perfection is attained, but change in the direction of effort. Already so many regions have been surveyed and deserted, already so many forms have been filled and emptied, already so many combinations have been made and scattered, already so many possessions have been owned and discarded, but none has proved of any avail. None has given the cherished satiation. The cause of trouble is not the lack of any survey of space and matter, the lack of any combination and possession, but the lack of faith in one's own divinity.

So long as one believes himself to be flesh, so long as one lives to the thrills of flesh, so long as one looks to matter for his longings, and sows his efforts therein, there can be no end to the bondage of matter, no end to

their fruits of pain and pleasure, no end to the cycles of births and deaths

One who soweth in flesh, shall reap the fruits of flesh, but one who soweth in spirit shall reap life everlasting.

Enough of this foolish life of flesh; enough of this illusive pursuit of matter, turn from outside into the inner, attend to thy self, hark to its longings, look to its glimpses, live to its tunes and see, how blissful and beautiful, how grand and magnanimous, how free and perfect thou art.

Desires and cravings, wrath and fear, pains and pleasures rising within thee are not thyself They, like ailments are all disturbing factors of life. They are all of foreign origin. They are all products of matter Godhood like natural health is thy heritage. For recovery of Godhood, the first essentiality is the prevention (Saṃvara) of the causes of ailments.

These causes are three-fold activities of body, speech and mind. They are the yokes (Yogas) which fasten self with matter. It is through them, thrills of the outside are let in, and mandates of the inner are sent out. It is through them that self develops the false relationship of 'I' and mine with matter. It is through them that self develops the false belief of good and bad in outside, the false belief of doer and doings of the outside. It is through them that self makes the outside region, the field of search for his longings It is through them that self develops, his false tendencies of nescience (Avidyā), exclusive tendencies of egoism (Ahankāra), and carnal tendencies of enjoyment (Vāsnās).

The path of liberation from these ailments, lies not through activities, but through prevention of activities of the above causes. It lies through strict watch on the workings of mind, strict vigilance on the stirrings of speech, strict discipline on the behaviour of body. This path in short is made of restraint (Gupti), vigilance

(Samiti) and discipline (Saṃyama). It is made of sacrifice, suffering and forbearance (Parīshah Jaya). Sacrifice of one's flesh is the best sacrifice, it leads to divinity.

6. This prevention of body, speech and mind alone, however, is not fficient to put an end to ailments. Though it undoubtedly puts a stop to future blunders of contact with the outside, it puts stop to the farther intensification of faults of nescience, egoism and vāsnās heaped by them in the past, yet unless these faults stuck to self are extricated root and branch, they continue to lie hidden deep in the self and disturb Godhood, the natural health of self by their subtle and sudden risings.

For the extrication (Nirjarā) of these faults, for the extrication of the wrong creed of oneness with body, relatives and possessions, for the extrication of the false sense of good and bad in the outside things, for the extrication of wrong sense of doer and doings of the outside, one should constantly– sitting or walking, working or talking--develop a passive attitude towards the outside and an active attitude towards the inner. This can be achieved by constant musings (Bhāvanās) about the realities of the self and the non-self, by constant meditation (Dhyāna) of the godly virtues of self, by constant living a life of equanimity (Samtā) and penance (Tapa), with repentance (Prāyashchit) for one's faults, and forgiveness (Kshamā) for other's with love (Maitrī) for all, respect (Pramod) for the virtuous, compassion (Karunā) for the needy and tolerance (Mādhyasta) for the perverse.

7 with these purgatory processes, the coils of Karmic dust covering the self get loose and wear away. With them their vital potentialities of urging pain and pleasure, birth and death also come to an end. With the removal of these foreign causes, the self shines out in its full effulgence like sun without clouds. Self becomes God with perfect peace, perfect bliss, perfect beauty and perfect lustre Self becomes the cherished goal, the

summum bonum of life in himself, with nothing more to search, nothing more to achieve. Self becomes the life everlasting.

This path of liberation (Mukti) is altogether different from the path of flesh. To be carnal-minded is death, while to be spiritual-minded is peace and bliss. Ignorance, passions and cravings are the greatest enemies of self, one who combats and conquers them is indeed the greatest victor (Jina) of life One cannot serve God and mammon both, one has to make his choice between the two. If thou yearnest for Godhood, if thou seekest liberation from pain and anxiety, from wants and misery, from decay and death, give up thy path of flesh and take to the path of spirit, made of right belief, right concept and right conduct. Believe thyself to be God in essence, conceive thyself to be God in heaven, and conduct thyself as God in perfection, with love and grace all round, with calmness and equanimity throughout.

"O Gautama! already time uncountable has past in starting and staying, in filling and emptying, in collecting and scattering, but the goal is still out of sight. Whatever has past will never return to you and what is left is fast fleeting The human life is the most precious of all. It is the threshold of salvation, the gateway of heaven. It is not easy to be attained. It is after countless sufferings and countless wanderings that thou hast been able to get it It is sheer folly to waste a single moment thereof Arise, awake, realise Death is fast looking into thy face. Before thy frail frame gets asunder from the twig of age and mixes with dust, dedicate it to the service of self"

In contrast to the gloomy picture of the world, writes Dr. B C. Law, as commonly known, stands in bold relief the bright prospect of the religious life as lived and taught by Mahāvira. The reassuring message which underlies all his teachings is, that soul is the highest reality

of life, and nirvāna is not extinction but the eternal and blissful condition of the soul in its perfection. This condition of soul is realisable in this very existence and solely by human efforts if they are well directed. The development and manifestation of supreme personality is the visible fruition of religious efforts leading to liberation. The life of the master offered for imitation by his earnest disciples stands as one of the highest examples of such a personality.

The heart of Jainism is not empty as Mrs. Stevenson thinks. It is of coarse empty of those faults of nescience which create illusions and confusion in mind and betray life from its path of harmony and virtue. It is empty of those wrong beliefs and concepts which make life identical with mortal body and its sensual cravings. It is empty of those egoistic tendencies which drag life to depravity and misery. So far the charge of emptyness is right, otherwise the heart of Jainism is all full of wisdom — of wisdom which gives sanctity to life, raises it in esteem, frees it from woes and worries, fills it with hope and lustre, endows it with sublimity and grandeur and all those cherished things of purity and perfection for which a full bloomed white lotus is held as an emblem in Jain Art. (Mahāvīra: His Life and Teaching P. 94).

This is in nutshell the ideal and the way of life taught by Tīrthankaras which hold out a promise for a democracy of equality, fraternity and brother-hood for all living creatures on this earth and make them free to evolve out their future to the best of their talents by their own balanced and controlled efforts.

NON-ABSOLUTISM: THE PECULIARITY OF JAINISM.

Like other schools of religion, Jainism also has its double aspect, ethical and metaphysical.

The Jain metaphysics based on a comprehensive view of the Universe, which is made of the seer and the seen, the observer and the observed. According to this view Universe is a complex fabric of close and compact infinite realities interlacing, intermixing and intereffecting each other. They may all be classifed into two broad categories,-self and non-self, living and non-living, soul and matter, both complementary and supplementary to each other in function, yet both independent in existence and different in characteristics. Out of them as told before soul is a subjective, conative and sentient reality while matter is an objective non-conative and insentient reality. It is for this composition that universe has got a double aspect-subjective and objective.

In its working this Universe has got dualistic aspect. It is receding yet approaching, it is ephemeral yet eternal, it is imagery yet real, it is momentary yet substantial, it is haphazardly yet systematic, it is stale yet fresh, it is agonising yet charming This double aspect is due to the fact that universe is not a static but a dynamic reality full of infinite potentialities ever becoming, ever changing, ever flowing. It is due to the fact that universe is not a chaotic heap of things, but a wonderful flay, a tragio comic drama of things full of meanings, ever proceeding, ever evolving, ever developing into new eveents, though unguessed and unknown by intellect, yet well related to the past and the future with an order of priority and subsequence, with a law of cause and effect, with a system of adjustment and harmony.

It is due to the fact, that not only the universe but every reality of which it is composed is a four dimensional reality comprised of substance (Dravya), potentiality (Bhāva), space (Kshetra) and time (Kāla) all corelative and coextensive aspects of one and the same thing. Every reality is a creative reality, implying thereby that it ever

extends in space, unfolds in time, manifests in diversity and persists in identity at one and the same time. Existence is not a hard and fast thing, it is a process of creation (Utpāda), recession (Vyaya) and persistence (Dhruva). It is a continuous stream of becoming, non-becoming and re-becoming with a persistence of substantial identity. It is only by intellectual extraction that its extension is termed as space, its changing is termed as time, its becoming is termed as potentiality and its persisting identity is termed as substance, otherwise all the above four factors are inextricable aspects of one and the same thing. Thus universe is a continuous stream of self-existing, self functioning realities, ever marching ever evolving into fresh forms and novel happenings of a vast connected drama, it does not stand in need of any outer agency to put it to motion or to keep it in a working order It is due to its dynamic and dualistic aspect that universe has got a unique charm and beauty in it. It is due to its close and compact nature, that one who is a full knower of one reality is the full knower of the whole universe

Though this universe has already manifested itself in so many names and forms, has already been experienced in so many meanings, has already been explored and explained from so many viow-points, yet it has neither finished nor out shown itself It is still as fresh and new as spring. It is still a running concern and is going to be a running concern for ever without any clouse or without anv pause. It is greater than all the calclations and conceptions hitherto made thereof by intellect. It is greater than all the past and present combined. It is infinite adinfinitum.

To have a simultaneous view of the totality of this infinite adinfinitum, with all its subjective and objective characteristics, with all its inter-relative and interdependent functioning, with all its chequered aspects of dialectical opposites-such as 'Is' and 'is not', one

and many, similar and dissimilar, eternal and ephemeral, determinate and indeterminate, prior and subsequent, cause and effect, good and bad, ugly and beautiful, is nigh to impossible for intellect. It is only an omniscient being, bereft of egoistic exclusiveness, bereft of nescient imaginations, with nothing to desire, nothing to achieve, a mere seer, a mere observer lost in ecstacy who can have such an absolute view of this prolific drama of of the universe. The view taken by intellect is never a whole view. It is always a partial view. It is never a real view-it is merely an abstract view. It is never an absolute view, it is merely relative view - relative to the beliefs, prejudices, mood, and purposes of the seer. As these beliefs, prejudices, moods and purposes of seers are of innumberable kinds, so the views of universe taken by different seers are of different kinds. Some subscribe to nihilism, others to realism, some to monoism, others to dualism, some to idealism, others to materialism, some to agnosticism, others to omniscientism, some to theism, others to atheism and so on By their very nature all these intellectual views are limited and incomplete, they are all relative and non-absolute, they are all partial and abstract views. They are all qualified by time and space, by motive and purpose, and by other limits of intellect. Undoubtedly each of these views has its own value in the practical life and is therefore true from the particular stand-point of the seer, but none of these views can claim to be the Perfect view of the whole totality. This point can be well illustrated by the example of the seven different views observed by seven blind men about one and the same elephant. For further elucidation, the following examples may also be added to it. The time which stands still for a lawyer in vacations, puts on wings for a youth in cinema. The nature smiles for one crowned with success, while it weeps for one engulfed in sorrow. The velocity of a train doubles for a passenger moving

in a direction opposite to another running train, while it deadens for a passenger moving parallel to the other one. Out of them to accept one view and deny the other is nothing but short-sightedness. In order to appreciate the worth of any view one must try to identify himself with the frame of mind which has given rise to it. To have a complete view of truth one will have to identify himself with the out-look of one who is all seer, all knower lost in ecstasy with nothing to desire, nothing to achieve. At intellectual level, this can be done only by synthesising, and harmonising all the different views of things in a systematic whole by giving each of them their due place in it.

Thus when intellect itself is unable to take a simultaneous grasp of the whole totality in one concept, how can language which is palpably composed of separate premises, be expected to grasp it in one expression. All vocal expressions are assertions of partial truths given prominence by the speaker to suit his immediate purpose. None of them is an index of the whole truth. The whole is indescribable (avaktavya) The whole is omkāra (ओंकार)

Shch being the state of affairs, Jainism takes a long realistic view of things in their true prespective of time and space. It is never dogmatic in its assertions. It always tries to appreciate different views of things and combine them into a coherent whole by giving them their due place in spatial and temporal system of the cosmos. Thus Jainism is a patron of a synthetic system of thought ever teaching broadness in outlook and toleration in grasp for tackling the problems of life within & of the World outside. In this way we are saved from falling a prey to mental errors, religious bigotary and vocal strifes.

It is for these reasons that the system of Jain philoshophy is termed, a system of realism (Yathārtvādi), a system of polyviews (Anekāntvādi), a system of relative values (Syādvādi).

RALATION OF BODY AND SOUL:

People generally identify themselves with their bodies.

It never strikes them that they are something more than a mere bundle of flesh and bones. Their mortal frame is sure to end one day and with it, the dust is sure to return to dust but even then there survives the entity of self, the conscious component of their individuality. When the question of relationship of body and soul was put to Mahāvira, he answered it in the following non-absolutary way.

Q. " Is the body, O Lord identical with the soul or is it different from it.?"

A. ' The body, O Gautama, is identical with soul as well as different from it.'

In mundane state, till soul is bound with nescience, one goes on identifying himself with his body, so much so that for all practical purposes he becomes one with it. With its growth he feels his growth and with its decay he feels his decay. With its activity he feels awakeness and with its lethargy he feels asleep. With its sickness he feels sick, and with its death he feels his death. From this practical point of view, self is identical with body. But from realistic point of view, self and body like the constituents of ore of gold, are quite distinct and aloof. Self is self and matter is matter, they never transform into one another.

One who is a right believer, ever discriminates between his self and body. He ever looks to his self as God in embryo, all knowing all seeing, all powerful with infinite bliss and joy. He is ever cautious to extend his love and grace to all He is ever mindful to bring kingdom of heaven on earth. But today man is running headlong after material progress little thinking, what will become of it in the absence of his right thinking, controlled mind and disciplined behaviour. This is the greatest calumny of fate. Let man arise above the values of his body and possessions, and peep into his own depth to see how grand & sublime he is. If he does so he is sure to become a champion of spiritual values, a follower of ahinsa and a saviour of mankind.